

The Special Interest Lobbying and Ethics Accountability Act (H.R. 2412)
U.S. Representative Ron Kind is an original cosponsor
Introduced on May 17, 2005
84 Cosponsors as of January 5, 2006

SLOWING THE REVOLVING DOOR:

- Doubles the current one-year waiting period for members, senior staff, and senior executive personnel lobbying Congress to two years.
- Requires the establishment of uniform regulations regarding the standards by which waivers on seeking employment by executive branch officials are granted. Requires the Executive branch to publish waivers that have been granted within 3 business days.
- Requires Members of Congress to disclose publicly their intent to seek outside employment if a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest exists, within 3 days.
- Amends the House's Code of Official Conduct to affirm that no Member or House employee may take or withhold any official action on the basis of partisan affiliation or the campaign contributions or support of any person or the prospect of personal gain either for oneself or any other person, or to threaten punitive action on the basis of any such consideration.

ENHANCING LOBBYING DISCLOSURE:

- Requires lobbyists to file financial disclosures quarterly rather than semi-annually as under current law.
- Requires electronic filing of lobbying reports to ensure timely public access.
- Mandates that the Clerk of the House create a searchable, sortable, web-based, downloadable, and publicly available database for lobbyist disclosure.
- Directs the Clerk of the House and the FEC to establish a system to provide direct hyperlinks between information disclosed by registered lobbyists and campaign finance disclosures for federal candidates.
- Require registered lobbyists to disclose members of Congress and senior executive branch officials with whom they have made lobbying contacts for the purposes of influencing legislation or public policy.
- Requires public reporting by registered lobbyists of all past senior-level legislative branch and executive branch employment. (The current requirement only goes back two years).
- Requires federal lobbyists to disclose amounts spent on grassroots lobbying.

- Identifies members of anonymous lobbying coalitions by requiring members of lobbying coalitions to report their involvement.

CURBING EXCESSES IN PRIVATELY FUNDED TRAVEL:

- Requires an organization sponsoring member or staff travel, prior to the trip, to submit written certification to the Clerk of the House or Secretary of the Senate verifying that:
 - The trip was not planned, organized, arranged, or financed by a registered lobbyist or foreign agent, or organized at the request of a registered lobbyist or foreign agent.
 - The organization did not accept funds specifically earmarked for the purpose of the trip from any source.
- Subjects persons who submit false certifications to a civil fine of \$100,000, with fines escalating to \$300,000 for second-time violators and \$500,000 for three or more violations.
- Requires disclosures submitted by members and staff no more than 30 days after trips to include a detailed itinerary and detailed descriptions of expenses.
- Directs the Ethics Committee to establish guidelines for allowable expenses on privately sponsored trips, taking into account the maximum "per diem" rates for official government travel published annually by the General Services Administration, Department of State, and Department of Defense.

STRENGTHENING ENFORCEMENT AND OVERSIGHT OF ETHICS AND LOBBYING DISCLOSURE:

- Directs the GAO to investigate and report to Congress twice annually on how the relevant House and Senate clerks and committees are performing in enforcing lobbying rules, and making appropriate recommendations. The GAO is charged with investigating whether the offices of the House clerk and Secretary of the Senate have the resources needed for effective oversight and enforcement and making appropriate recommendations.
- Mandates that the House Administration Committee and Judiciary Committee hold hearings on the GAO's semiannual reports.
- Increases the potential civil penalty for failing to file lobbying reports from \$50,000 to \$100,000.
- Establishes a bipartisan task force to review ethics oversight and enforcement.

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